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25 February 1966

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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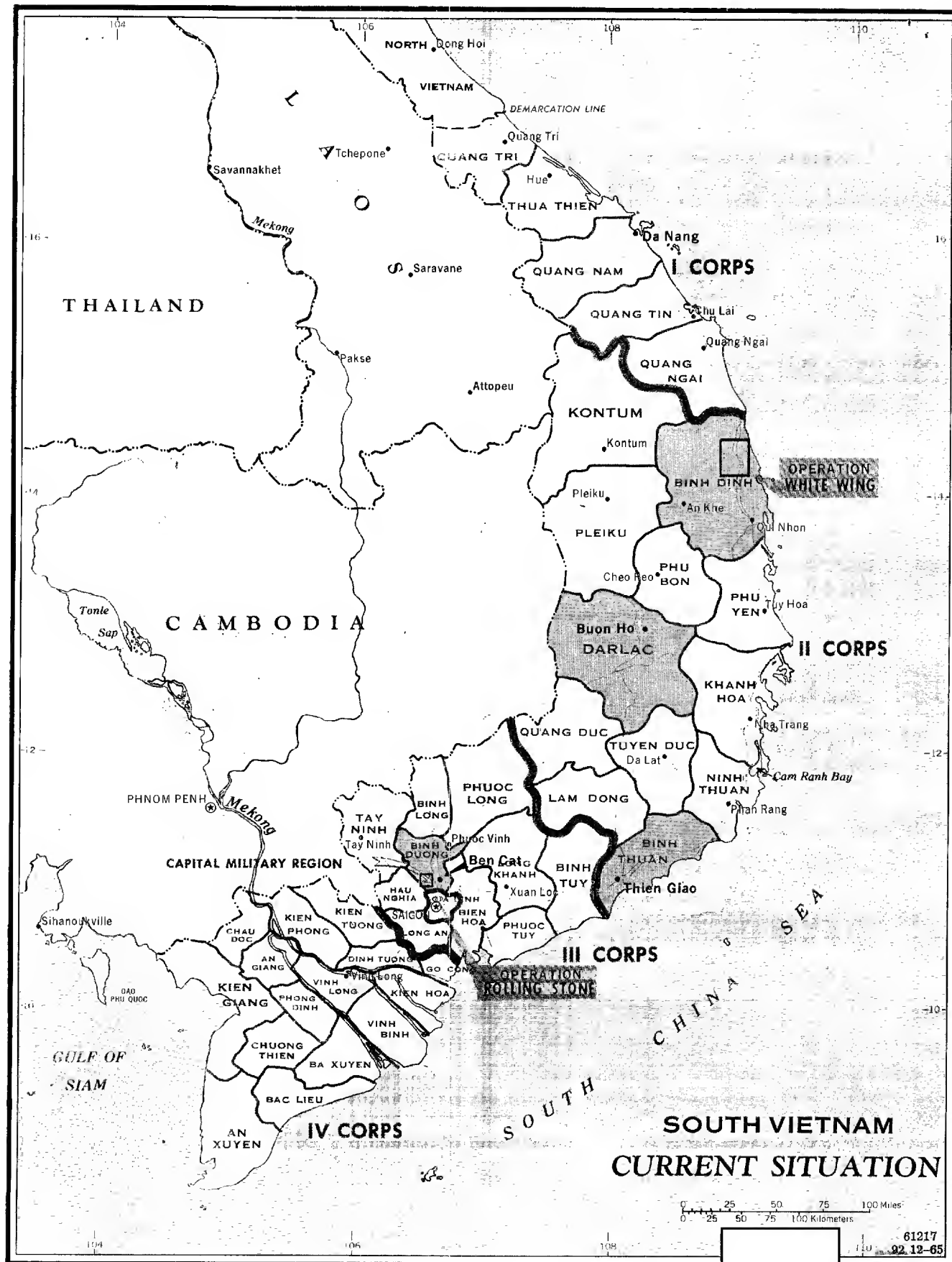
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*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EST)

The Military Situation in South Vietnam: The recent increase in Viet Cong activity continued yesterday, as enemy forces attacked a district town and allied troops in the field.

Early yesterday, an estimated battalion of Viet Cong attacked elements of the US First Infantry Division conducting Operation ROLLING STONE about ten miles north of the district town of Ben Cat in Binh Duong Province. A second battle developed later when US troops began searching the vicinity. US forces sustained casualties of 22 killed and 98 wounded while killing 130 Viet Cong and capturing 15 others.

One battalion of the US First Air Cavalry Division also battled Viet Cong forces of estimated battalion strength for some five hours yesterday in Operation WHITE WING in northeastern Binh Dinh Province. Preliminary results of this action indicate three US killed and 59 wounded. Viet Cong casualties were 52 killed and 14 captured.

In Binh Thuan Province, another Viet Cong unit of probable battalion strength attacked the district town of Thien Giao, inflicting casualties of 26 killed, 55 wounded, and 19 missing. Enemy losses were reported as 57 killed and one captured.

On 23 February, the district town of Buon Ho in Darlac Province, defended by three Popular Force platoons, was attacked by an enemy force of unknown size. Friendly forces suffered eight killed, six wounded, and eight missing. Enemy casualties have not been reported. US military officials in Saigon have commented

(continued)

that the attack may have been conducted by elements of the North Vietnamese 32nd Regiment.

Political Developments in Saigon: [Numerous reports suggest an early increase in Viet Cong political agitation in urban areas.]

[redacted] the Viet Cong plan to instigate mass demonstrations in Saigon to demand higher wages and an end to conscription and air and artillery strikes.

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[redacted] the Viet Cong may try to aggravate inflationary pressure in Saigon by tightening a blockade of principal routes leading from the city to the provinces.]

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[redacted] the Viet Cong "Liberation Students' Association" in Da Nang may attempt to transform forthcoming Buddhist religious ceremonies in late February or early March into anti-American and antigovernment demonstrations.] [redacted]
(Map)

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Indonesia: Sukarno now seems likely to resume the leftist policies he had pursued prior to 1 October.

At his cabinet installation ceremony on 24 February, Sukarno announced that Indonesia would concentrate on destroying the "remnants of feudalism" within the nation and on crushing "imperialism," with emphasis on Malaysia. He said anyone who could not understand these policies was "paralyzed by liberal thinking."

Referring to the student demonstrations against the cabinet which were going on during the installation, Sukarno indicated he would not give way to student pressures. He declared that only "Bung Karno" is suited to lead "the revolution."

Only the students have openly resisted Sukarno's cabinet reshuffle and his downgrading of the army. In view of the successful cabinet installation and the lack of significant army support, student activity seems likely to diminish, but may not subside altogether. [Funeral services for several students who were killed on 24 February presumably will keep the youths in the streets for another day and could provoke more incidents.]

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Uganda: [Opposition to Prime Minister Obote is beginning to coalesce, and fighting may soon break out in Kampala.]

[Troops loyal to ousted army commander Brigadier Opoloto seized control yesterday of army headquarters in Kampala, and are protecting President Mutesa's residence against any move by Obote.]

[The President, besides being constitutional head of state, is the traditional ruler of the country's most important tribe, whose territory surrounds Kampala. He may serve as the rallying point for the majority of Ugandans who are incensed by Obote's abolition of the constitution.]

[The outcome of any further moves by Opoloto's troops is uncertain because the more effective special police appear to be following Obote's orders.]

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Poland-Albania: Relations between Warsaw and Tirana have again deteriorated sharply.

The expulsion of the Albanian ambassador from Warsaw on 23 February appears to be in part a reaction to Albania's vituperative and public rejection earlier in the month of a Polish initiative concerning Vietnam. The Poles had privately proposed a Communist bloc meeting to coordinate aid to Hanoi.

The announced reasons for the ouster were that the Albanian Embassy has been engaging in "antistate" propaganda and was involved in the recent illegal departure from Poland of one of party first secretary Gomulka's hard-line political opponents. The Albanian propaganda activities, however, have been known to the Poles for years, but the linking of the Polish party's Stalinists with the Albanians seems to be a new development.

The Poles apparently had hoped that the Albanian leadership would follow their lead and overlook bad relations on the party and ideological levels while working to improve state relations. Warsaw had announced on 30 January that its diplomatic mission in Tirana was again headed by an ambassador after a lapse of five years.

In recent months Tirana had shown an interest in broadening its ties with selected Communist and non-Communist countries. The manner and tone of Albania's rejection of the Polish proposal were clearly intended to demonstrate that Tirana's activities on the state level do not imply any change in its opposition to the Soviet bloc's "revisionist" policies.

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NOTES

UK - South Africa - Rhodesia: [South Africa's foreign minister has told the British ambassador that oil deliveries to Rhodesia from private South African sources do not violate Pretoria's policy of "normal trade" with Rhodesia, since normal trade includes attempts to increase foreign trade. He added that an effort by the South African Government to stop oil sales would amount to official participation in the Rhodesian boycott and would be contrary to South Africa's fundamental opposition to all boycotts. Notwithstanding these comments, the British ambassador is still optimistic that South Africa will work behind the scenes to reduce private oil shipments to Rhodesia.]

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Syria: The coup leaders are apparently consolidating their control throughout the country. Key military units on the Israeli border, approximately 60 miles from Damascus, originally opposed the coup, but they have made no move thus far and may have decided not to resist. The 24-hour curfew in Damascus was eased on 24 February. The situation remains confused in Aleppo--200 miles to the north--where some opposition to the takeover may be continuing..

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Italy: Premier Moro has succeeded in forming his third center-left coalition cabinet, and the disunity within his Christian Democratic (CD) party which precipitated the government crisis appears to have been papered over. The CD and its principal governing partners achieved at least their minimum objectives in the allocation of cabinet posts, and the fact that all CD factions are now represented should provide some stability for the coalition. The rivalry between Moro and Foreign Minister Fanfani, however, can be expected to continue. The anticipated merger of two Socialist parties in the coalition, which is a matter of concern to some elements of the CD, could cause new strains within the government.

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Colombia: Demonstrations protesting the killing of ex-priest Camilo Torres on 15 February during a clash between his guerrilla band and an army patrol are continuing in Bogota, Cali, and other major cities. There have been isolated incidents of truck burnings, bombings, and stonings, but no deaths or injuries have been reported. The extreme leftist National Federation of University Students has disavowed the violence and called for only peaceful demonstrations. Army and police units had been prepared for trouble and can probably keep the demonstrations under control.

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The Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

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The Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of Navy

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